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Follow-up to and implementation of the outcome of the 2002 International Conference on Financing for Development and the preparation of the 2008 Review Conference

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Letter dated 20 April 2009 from the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to write to you in reference to the seventh Summit of the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA), held in Cumaná, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, on 16 and 17 April 2009.

The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reiterates its adherence to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and believes that the United Nations is the primary multilateral forum for tackling the challenges faced by the international community.

In that connection, I have the honour to attach herewith copies of the following documents, adopted at the seventh ALBA Summit:

- Document of the countries of the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas presented at the Fifth Summit of the Americas (see annex);
- Declaration of the Fifth Extraordinary Summit of the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA) — People's Trade Agreement (TCP) (see appendix).

We should be grateful if the present letter and its annexes could be circulated as official documents of the General Assembly.

We propose that the above-mentioned documents be considered under agenda item 48, Follow-up to and implementation of the outcome of the 2002 International Conference on Financing for Development and the 2008 Review Conference and agenda item 107: Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit, respectively.

(Signed) Jorge **Valero**
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 20 April 2009 from the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Document of the countries of the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA) presented at the Fifth Summit of the Americas

Cumaná, 17 April 2009

The Heads of State and Government of Bolivia, Cuba, Dominica, Honduras, Nicaragua and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), member countries of ALBA, believe that the draft Declaration of the Fifth Summit of the Americas is inadequate and unacceptable for the following reasons:

It does not proffer solutions to the global economic crisis, despite the fact that the crisis is the most daunting challenge to confront humanity in decades and the most significant threat to the well-being of our peoples in our time.

It unjustly excludes Cuba, and makes no mention of the general consensus in the regional condemning the embargo and attempted isolation that the Cuban people and Government have been relentlessly and criminally subjected to.

For this reason, the member countries of ALBA believe that there is no consensus on adopting this draft Declaration, and, in view of the foregoing, we propose an in-depth debate on the following issues:

1. Capitalism is destroying humanity and the planet. We are facing not just another cyclical crisis, but rather a global economic crisis that is systemic and structural in nature. Those who think that an infusion of tax monies and a few regulatory measures will resolve this crisis are seriously mistaken. The financial system is in crisis because it lists paper securities at six times the real value of property and services produced in the world. This is no "failure in the regulation of the system"; rather, it is an integral part of the capitalist system, which speculates on all property and securities in order to obtain maximum profit. Thus far, 100 million more people are hungry and 50 million more are unemployed as a result of the economic crisis — and these figures continue to rise.

2. Capitalism has caused an ecological crisis by subjugating the resources essential to survival on the planet to market and profit imperatives. Each year, human beings consume a third more than what the planet is capable of replenishing. If such wasteful capitalist consumption persists at this rate, we will need two planet Earths by the year 2030.

3. The global economic, climate, food and energy crises are products of capitalist decadence, which threatens to annihilate life on the planet and the planet itself. In order to avoid that outcome, it will be necessary to develop an alternative to the capitalist model, a model that promotes:

- Solidarity and complementarity over competition;
- Harmonious coexistence with our mother Earth rather than pillaging of natural resources;

- Cultural diversity instead of cultural levelling and imposition of cultural values and ways of life alien to the realities of our countries;
- Peace based on social justice, not on imperialist policies and wars;
- In short, a system that restores the human condition of our societies and peoples and does not reduce them to mere consumers or merchandise.

4. As a tangible expression of the continent's new reality, we, the Latin American and Caribbean countries, have begun to build our own institutionality, rooted in our common history going back to our wars of independence and a concrete tool for deepening the social, economic and cultural transformation processes necessary to consolidate our full sovereignty. ALBA-TCP, Petrocaribe and the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), to name only the newest entities, are mechanisms for union and solidarity created in the heat of these sweeping changes with the clear aim of empowering our Peoples to achieve their own liberation. To cope with the serious impact of the global economic crisis, we, the ALBA-TCP countries, have taken innovative and transforming measures to find genuine alternatives to the inadequate international economic order rather than strengthen its failed institutions. Thus, we have initiated a Single Regional Compensation System (SUCRE), which includes a Common Account Unit, a Clearinghouse and a Single Reserve System. We have also promoted the establishment of "grannational" enterprises to satisfy the basic needs of our peoples through mechanisms for fair and complementary trade untainted by the absurd mentality of unbridled competition.

5. We call into question the Group of Twenty (G-20) decision to triple the resources of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) when what is really needed is a new global economic order that provides for the overhaul of IMF, the World Bank and WTO, which, with their neoliberal conditionalities, have helped to bring on this global economic crisis.

6. Solutions to the global economic crisis and the definition of new international financial architecture must be adopted with the participation of the 192 countries that will gather at the United Nations Conference at the Highest Level on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development, to be held from 1 to 3 June, to propose the creation of a new international economic order.

7. As for the climate change crisis, the developed countries have an ecological debt towards the world, as they are responsible for 70 per cent of the historic carbon emissions accumulated in the atmosphere since 1750. The developed countries, which are debtors towards humanity and the planet, must contribute significant resources to a fund that will enable the developing countries to adopt a model of growth that does not replicate the serious effects of capitalist industrialization.

8. Solutions to the energy, food and climate change crises must be comprehensive and interdependent. We cannot resolve a problem by causing others in areas that are fundamental to life itself. For example, the widespread use of agrofuels can only have a negative impact on food prices and on the use of vital resources such as water, land and forests.

9. We condemn any form of discrimination against immigrants. Immigration is a human right, not a crime. We therefore call for urgent reform of the United States Government's immigration policies with a view to halting deportations and massive raids and enabling families to be reunited, and we call for the elimination of the wall that separates and divides us instead of uniting us. In this connection, we call for the

repeal of the Cuban Adjustment Act and the elimination of the discriminatory and selective wet-foot, dry-foot policy, which have caused loss of human life. The real culprits in the financial crisis are the bankers who have helped themselves to our countries' money and resources, and not the migrant workers. Human rights come first, and, in particular, the human rights of the most vulnerable and marginalized sector of our society — undocumented immigrants. If integration is to be achieved, there must be freedom of movement of persons and human rights for all on an equal basis regardless of their immigration status. The brain drain is another way in which qualified human resources are plundered by the rich countries.

10. The basic services of education, health, water, energy and telecommunications must be declared human rights and not be subject to private negotiation or commercialized through the World Trade Organization (WTO). These services are and must be essentially public services, and access to them must be universal.

11. We hope for a world where all countries, great and small, have the same rights and where there are no empires. We are for non-intervention. We are for strengthening — as the sole legitimate basis for discussion and analysis of the continent's bilateral and multilateral agendas — mutual respect between States and Governments, in accordance with the principle of non-intervention by one State in the affairs of another State and the inviolability of sovereignty and self-determination of peoples. We exhort the new Government of the United States, whose arrival in office has kindled expectations in the region and in the world, to put an end to the long and damaging tradition of interventionism and aggression which has characterized the actions of that country's Government down through history, and in particular, the intensification of such practices during the administration of George W. Bush. It should also do away with interventionist practices, including covert operations, parallel diplomacy, media pressure to destabilize States and Governments and the financing of destabilizing groups. It is crucial to build a world where the diversity of economic, political, social and cultural approaches is recognized and respected.

12. With regard to the United States embargo against Cuba and the exclusion of Cuba from the Summit of the Americas, the countries of the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas reiterate the Declaration on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the Government of the United States of America against Cuba, including the application of the so-called Helms-Burton Act, adopted by all the Latin American and Caribbean countries on 16 December 2000. The following are among its key provisions:

> "**CONSIDERING:** the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, and the statements on it adopted at numerous international meetings,
>
> "**WE AFFIRM**, in the defence of free trade and transparency in international trade, that the application of unilateral coercive measures that affect the well-being of peoples and hamper integration processes is unacceptable;
>
> "**WE REJECT** in the strongest terms the application of laws and measures that are contrary to international law, such as the Helms-Burton Act, and urge the Government of the United States of America to cease applying it.

"**WE REQUEST** the Government of the United States of America to comply with the provisions of the 17 successive resolutions adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations and to end its economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba."

We also believe that efforts to push Cuba into isolation have failed, as Cuba today is an integral part of the Latin American and Caribbean region and a member of the Rio Group and other regional organizations and mechanisms, engages in a policy of cooperation and solidarity with the countries of the region and promotes the full integration of the Latin American and Caribbean peoples. Thus, there are absolutely no grounds for its exclusion from the Summit of the Americas.

13. The developed countries have allocated no less than $8 trillion to salvage the collapsed financial structure. They are the ones who have not delivered on their pledge to allocate a little something towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, or 0.7 per cent of their gross domestic product for official development assistance. Never before has the hypocrisy of the rich countries' rhetoric been laid bare to such an extent. Cooperation must be established without conditions and it must be adapted to the agendas of the recipient countries by simplifying procedures, making resources accessible and highlighting social inclusion issues.

14. The legitimate struggle against drug trafficking, organized crime or any other manifestation of the so-called "new threats" must not be utilized as a pretext for interference and intervention harmful to our countries.

15. We are firmly convinced that only some of the organization, mobilization and unity of our peoples can bring change that everyone can believe in.

As the Liberator said:

"Unity of our peoples is not a mere illusion of men, but the inexorable decree of destiny."

Simón Bolívar